

Homily Loyola Chapel
The Mass of the Holy Spirit
Sept. 27, 1981

I. Context of the Homily

- a. universal church - theme conversion of heart
- b. application to Concordia
 - 1. place - university
 - 2. time - beginning of school year

II Ezekiel 18: 25-28

When ~~disobedient~~ person renounces integrity death follows
When ~~a~~ person renounces sin life follows

- a. aFirst thing: renunciation involves a conversion of heart
- b. renunciation has power to bring death or life (different kinds)
- c. need right kind of renunciation
- d. at beginning of school year: what do we want to renounce?
what kind of coversion of heart are we seeking?
- e. the key here is integrity . What is it?

passage from ST. Paul helpful here

III St. Paul letter to the Philippians 2: 1-11

" If our life in Christ means anything to you,"
then be united in your convictions and in your love,...
with a common purpose and a common mind.

There is to be no competition among you, no conceit "

- a. integrity can be interpreted in the light of this view and in the context of the university
 - 1. common purpose and common mind, united convictions and united love...in the search for truth.
 - a. not mean everyone agree, but that they have the clear goal of search for truth
 - b. guard against the disillusion of this goal into the sheer greed for knowledge
 - c. Christ has been revealed as The Truth (the way, the life and the truth).
 - d. how is Christ specifically revealed in the context of a specific university?
 - e. for teachers also the challenge of teaching
 - to awaken in students the love of truth
 - to precipitate a conversion of heart towards the love of truth
 - , - to receive all students as Christ
 - f. Marguerite Bourgeoys
- " It is the work (most) suited to draw down the graces of God if it is done with purity of intention, without distinction between the poor and the rich, between relatives and friends and strangers, between the pretty and the ugly, the gentle and the grumblers, looking upon them all as (part of Christ's body)." (reflects Concordia's heritage)
 - g. integrity involves then the honest search for truth. ~~as well~~
 - h. "If our life in Christ means anything to you, then be united in your convictions and your life... with a common purpose and a common mind."

2 ! There is to be no competition among you, no conceit."

- a. the challenges and difficulties of the gift of intelligent minds.
- b. capable of seeking and finding truth
- c. equally capable of abusing this gift by contentious argumentation, delight in dominating others in discussion, and orientated only towards finding the weakness in others' reasoning.

" If our life in Christ means anything to you...then d. integrity then demands the renunciation of the spirit of competition, or the spirit of conceit.

- e. or inversely to renounce integrity, by allowing your minds to be taken over by competition and conceit leads to a kind of death.
- f. therefore a conversion of heart demands an effort of the will, a continuous effort, to engage in the search for truth in the spirit of cooperation and mutual respect.

IV The Gospeal according to St. Matthew 21: 28-32

The story of the two sons:

said yes, but acted no

said no, but acted yes.

- a. Christ concluded from this papable that the act was more important than the word,
- b. Pope John Paul has reaffirmed this teaching recently in his philosophical work entitled The Acting Person

" For us action reveals the person,"

- c. in the academic life, the gifts of mind, being so powerful, can become detached from the whole person. "Think and say one thing, and do the opposite"
- ' joke in philosophy that teachers of ethics are frequently the most immoral people'
- d. therefore the call to integrity, is a call to integration of mind, body, and spirit. Disintegration of fragmentation of the self leads to a kind of stagnation or death in the self.
- e. inversely, the effort of will to integration leads to life.
- f. takes practice, failures, and overcomings. especially willingness to begin again .
- g. the priority of action, ~~xxxxxx~~ indicates the essential communal dimension of the call to be a follower of Christ. The person is revealed within a communal context.

h. the particular context at Concordia is of the struggle to be a follower of Christ in a secular university.

1. Pere Bro (post Christian world) offers a different challenge from pre Christian world
2. The world has antibodies against Christianity a kind of vaccination.
3. Therefore takes a greater effort to work towards integrity in own life as well as a greater effort to work towards a communal dimension of Christian life.
4. Conversion of heart then demands
 - a. renunciation of certain things (the spirit of competition and conceit)
 - b. choice of others (the goal of the honest search for truth)
 - c. and practice of integrity daily in our particular communal contexts
 - i. in the class room
 - ii. departmental meetings
 - iii. student activities.
 - d. today have the opportunity to renew this challenge and to pray for the help of the One who has called us on this path

1. at the Mass of the Holy Spirit can pray for help in this conversion of heart and make an act of will to begin anew during this academic year
2. then during the year if this prayer is aided by the overcoming of failure through the sacrament of confession direct
3. and strengthened by the gift of Christ to us in the Eucharist
4. then we may even be able from time to time to be the child who even says 'yes' and does 'yes' to the will of the Father.